

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11, 14-19, and 22-25, 28, and 30 are pending. Claims 12, 21, 26, 27, and 29 are canceled by the present amendment. Claims 13 and 20 were canceled previously. Claims 1 and 14 are amended. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 14 is self-evident. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-11, 14-19, 22-25, 28, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 as omitting a cooperative structural relationship, Claim 1 is amended to recite “a lower ring body disposed directly below the periphery of the substrate to be processed and directly below at least a portion of the ring member wherein the lower ring body surrounds a periphery of the electrostatic chuck.” Support for the amendment to Claim 1 can be found in Fig. 2 and the description thereof. Accordingly, the language suggested on page 2 of the outstanding Office Action has been incorporated in Claim 1, and Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom as indefinite is overcome.

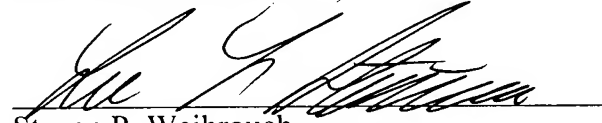
Regarding the rejection of Claim 14, Claim 14 is amended to clarify that the susceptor is made of an electrically conductive material. Support for the amendment to Claim 14 can be found in Fig. 2 and the description thereof. As Claim 14 is amended in accordance with the suggestion in the outstanding Office Action, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 14 and the claims depending therefrom is overcome.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-11, 14-19, and 22-25, 28, and 30 is earnestly solicited.

Should Examiner MacArthur deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, she is encouraged to contact Applicants' representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven P. Weihrouch', is written over a horizontal line.

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